

1a Excel with a consultant

Alaskan Way Viaduct closure, demolition and public event

Keep traffic moving: SR 99 construction bypass

TransComm 2012 Skills Competition

Raleigh, North Carolina

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Washington State Department of Transportation



Situation:

The SR 99 Alaskan Way Viaduct (AWV) is a critical north/south corridor that carries 110,000 vehicles to Seattle daily. Damaged in a 2001 earthquake, the 60-year-old elevated structure runs along the scenic waterfront. A mega-project spanning several years eventually will replace the existing structure with a bored tunnel. In October 2011, significant disruption to traffic and routines was expected as WSDOT approached a nine-day closure of this highly traveled corridor. The closure would allow for demolition of the southern mile of the old viaduct where the second of two bridges would be built, construction of temporary bypass routes and the linking of the first of the new bridges to the remaining half of the viaduct.

Challenge:

Communicate to a diverse audience with a carmageddon-like urgency about issues concerning this highly visible work and the associated traffic shifts and closures, and encourage the public to plan ahead for the upcoming activities that would have to be completed over a nine-day period.

Ways to get around with the 9 day viaduct closure! **KING**

Countdown to viaduct closure is on. **KING**

Seattle launches new traffic cameras ahead of viaduct closure. **KING**

Viaduct Closure Survival Guide. **KOMO**

Water taxi could sail through viaduct closure. **Seattle Times**

Live video streaming during 9-day viaduct closure. **Seattle Times**

You're being watched...to make viaduct closure go more smoothly. **KPLU**

Tunnel building challenge: It's an industrial structure and a jewel box. **Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce**

New technology to help keep traffic moving during Alaskan Way Viaduct work **West Seattle Herald**

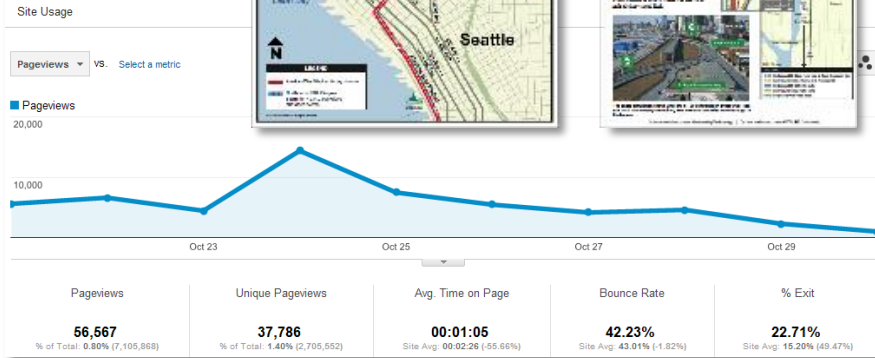
Updated start time: Alaskan Way Viaduct closure will affect transit times. **West Seattle Herald**

Viaduct closure alternate route: West Seattle Bridge to 1st Avenue. (video) **KING**



Public:

Handouts described the SR 99 viaduct closure and what drivers could expect when the viaduct reopened.



The team led a comprehensive communications effort to inform the public about impacts. A variety of tools were used, including [project Web pages](#), graphics, maps, [visualizations](#), handouts for commute planning and a video simulating the [construction bypass](#). These tools were emailed to stakeholders, provided to large employers, presented at community meetings and posted online so people knew how to get around during construction and to show how SR 99 would function when the road re-opened.

We placed online advertising and free stories on more than 20 neighborhood-oriented blogs, linked to a **“What’s Happening Now” Web page**. More than 200 neighborhood groups and businesses were contacted to prepare for the closure.

Media:

Working closely with the media to reach a large audience and generate awareness, we pitched story ideas to TV, radio, print and Web-based media outlets to help the public understand why the construction [work and closure](#) were necessary, show them how the [SR 99 corridor would change](#) and ask them to consider using [other transportation modes](#) for their commute.

During the closure, we sent [daily news releases](#) to share real-time information and keep our key messages about the latest traffic conditions and demolition/construction progress at the forefront. Media also helped tell the story when [demolition](#) and construction were [completed two days ahead of schedule](#).



Events:

SO glad to see munchers doing this slowly versus an earthquake bringing it down on top of our neighbors... FINALLY... the beginning of the end of a dangerous era!! [Krisj5886](#)

Thank you for this! I'm very excited to see this go away;_ yes, I know it was an icon of Seattle but I'm optimistic we will replace the viaduct with something better... [Raganti1](#)

SR 99 is a familiar route through Seattle and the public has somewhat of a love/hate relationship with the [viaduct structure](#). Although some of the best views of the Puget Sound come from a drive on the top road deck, the crumbling viaduct is an unsightly divide, presenting a stark contrast between the scenic waterfront and a modern skyline. To provide some honor for this historic structure, further engage the public and media, celebrate this project milestone of demolition, and draw more attention to the closure, WSDOT planned an unprecedented day of [public events](#) and a [contest to gain exclusive access](#) to the viaduct.

“One Last Shot” contest: The [contest](#) offered a [unique opportunity](#) to create a once-in-a-lifetime memory, awarding the winner [exclusive access](#) and 30 minutes on the viaduct to send the structure out in style. A panel of judges including WSDOT leadership and two local talk-show hosts (often critical of transportation work) were enlisted to help with the selection process. Judges were so impressed they [chose two winners](#): a roller derby team “Rat City Rollergirls,” and “Seattle Cossacks,” a stunt-motorcycle group.

Viaduct walk and celebration: On the first day of the closure, [Gov. Chris Gregoire](#) led the public ceremony. [Events](#) included a [walk](#) on the viaduct’s southern section, and the “one last shot” contest winners joined forces and rolled down an on-ramp to join the crowd.

Daredevils, rollergirls take over viaduct on day 1 of demolition. **KING**

Alaskan Way Viaduct public walk. **Seattle Times**

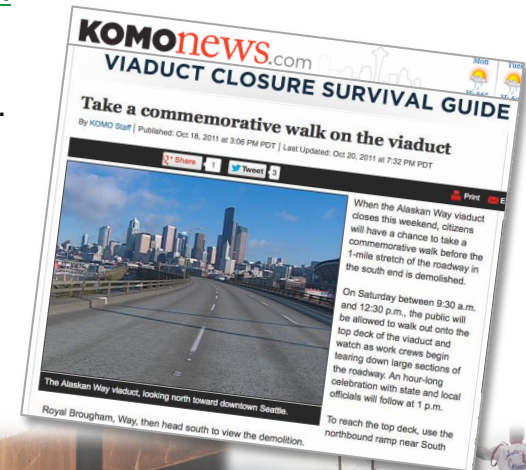
Skates and stunts to take over the Alaskan Way Viaduct on Saturday. **KING**

Roller derby, motorcycle stunt team win viaduct contest. **Seattle PI**

A nostalgic walk on the viaduct. **KING**

Rat City Rollergirls take a spin on the viaduct. **KING**

Hundreds walk Seattle viaduct as demolition starts **Seattle Times**



Goals/Objectives:

To **create early awareness of the project** and closure to prevent surprises, minimize traffic disruptions and prevent region-wide gridlock, and demonstrate the necessity of the demolition.

The **walk and contest**, provided one last opportunity for the public to enjoy and reflect on the historic significance of the viaduct, **celebrate project achievements** and milestones, and increase **awareness of the closure** and the project through participation in the events.

*W. Seattle businesses offer 'viadeals' during closure. **KOMO***

*Viaduct Crunch: Up-to-the-minute updates. **KING***

*Seattleites brace for first commute with no viaduct. **KOMO***

*Alaskan Way Viaduct closure begins. **KING***

*The view from the viaduct. **West Seattle Herald***

*Traffic snarls I-5 after viaduct closure. **Seattle PI***

*Seattle viaduct now closed. **Everett Herald***

*Alaskan Way Viaduct closure, demolition begin. **Seattle PI***

*A day without the viaduct: One commuter's story. **Seattle PI***

*Football game gives Viaduct closure its first test. **KIRO***

*Seattle drivers navigating tougher commute. **Seattle PI***

*Thousands say goodbye to viaduct. **Seattle Times***

*Commuters' viaduct questions still rolling in. **Seattle Times***

*Northbound viaduct ramps closed for safety. **Seattle PI***

*Viaduct closure, Round 2. **Seattle PI***

*Viaduct Update And 'It Can't Happen Here' **KUOW***

*Viaduct demolition begins. **KCPQ***

*Thousands walk Seattle viaduct as demolition starts. **KOMO***

*Are you prepared for the viaduct crunch? **KING***

*Thousands of viaduct commuters seek alternate routes. **KCPQ***

*Viaduct Crunch: First big commute goes smoothly for most. **KING***

*With viaduct's closing, nine-day ordeal for drivers begins. **KING***

*With viaduct closed, Seattle braces for messy commute. **Seattle PI***

*Want to walk on the viaduct Saturday? Better hurry. **Seattle PI***

*DOT: Viaduct closure could have region-wide traffic impact. **KOMO***

*Seattle drivers to face weekday commute without viaduct. **KING***

*It's here: 9-day Alaskan Way Viaduct closure starts tonight. **KIRO***

*Post Viaduct Crunch: The drive going northbound Highway 99. **KING***

*Post Viaduct Crunch: The drive going southbound Highway 99. **KING***

*Evening commute backing up worse than morning. **Today File***

*SkyKING flies over viaduct demolition. **KING***

*Viaduct demolition becomes spectator event. **KING***

*Could the viaduct become a park? City says probably not. **KING***

*West Seattle 'like Gilligan's Island' during viaduct closure. **KING***

*Why I'll make the commute worse on Tuesday. **KING Blog***

*One-lane highway, viaduct work will slow football game traffic. **WSU News***

*Nine-day Alaskan Way Viaduct closure has begun. **Ballard News Tribune***

*Alaskan Way Viaduct gets one last hurrah. **West Seattle Herald***

Results:

Crews successfully completed the work ahead of schedule, keeping WSDOT's commitment to limit the number of viaduct closures during construction. By warning about the closure early and keeping drivers informed during the closure, traffic volumes on I-5, the other major north/south corridor, decreased by as much as 17 percent during the morning and up to 14 percent during the afternoon commute. Other modes such as the [water taxi](#) saw record-breaking ridership and [bike commuting](#) increased despite terrible weather.

Media coverage before and during the closure was constant. Nearly **250 news stories and blog articles** featured information about the closure, construction bypass and public event. Major news outlets created their own "[survival guides](#)" or [Web pages](#) with photos, links to tools and coverage of traffic patterns. National media helped preview the upcoming closure and demolition plans. We sent **17 media releases** and **advisories** and conducted more than **60 media interviews** to provide up-to-the-minute information.

'Viadoom' is now 'viadone' - viaduct open in both directions **KING**

Viaduct reopens ahead of schedule **KCPQ**

Fast Work Ends Seattle's 'Viadoom' 2 Days Early **KIRO**

Alaskan Way Viaduct reopens **KIRO**

WSDOT: Alaskan Way Viaduct to reopen Saturday. **KOMO**

Alaskan Way Viaduct reopens with major changes to route. **KOMO**

Official: Seattle viaduct to open mid-day Saturday. **Seattle PI**

Seattle viaduct to reopen mid-day Saturday. **Seattle Times**

Seattle Viaduct reopens to traffic early. **News Tribune**

Viaduct on Seattle waterfront opens two days early / video of bypass. **Renton Reporter**

Viaduct in Seattle ready for first commute Monday morning... **Renton Reporter**

#ViaDone: Alaskan Way Viaduct ready for first commute **Ballard News Tribune**

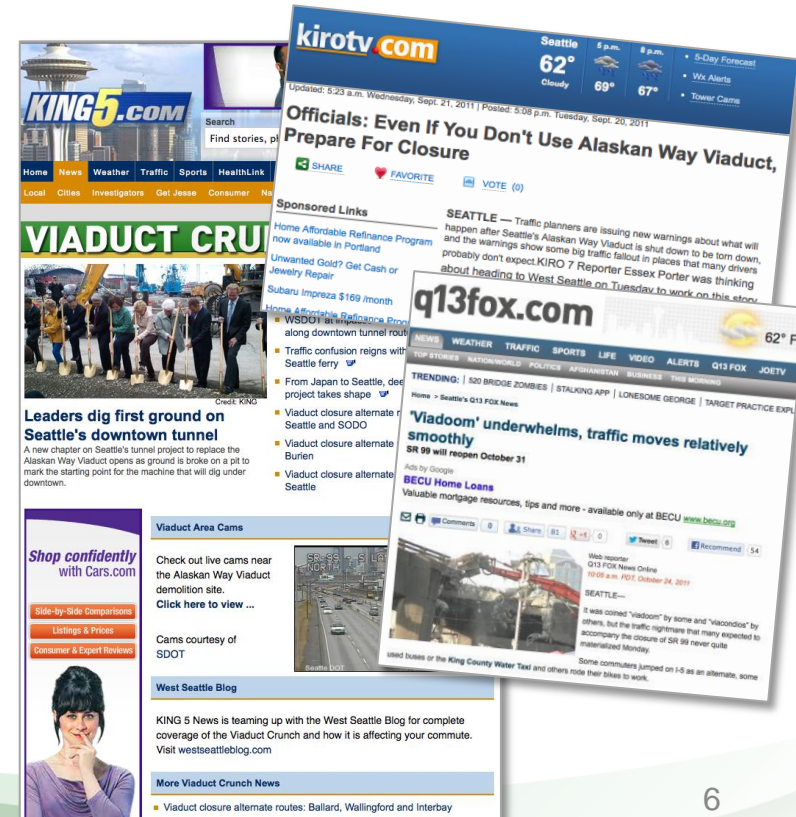
Viaduct opens two days ahead of schedule. **My Northwest**

Viaduct to reopen early: Midday tomorrow. **West Seattle Blog**

Video: End of 'Viadoom' as Alaskan Way Viaduct reopens. **West Seattle Blog**

Via-new: 1st morning commute with reconfigured Highway 99. **West Seattle Blog**

Viaduct/Highway 99 reopening early. **YouTube via West Seattle Blog**



Results:

At least with these videos, we know what it would look like of the viaduct falling during an earthquake.
[WasabiMeal](#)

Website, online media and photos: The program website provided drivers and the media with up-to-the-minute traffic information during the closure. Our “What’s Happening Now” **Web page received more than 56,000 views** (compared to a similar seven-day period in September that had 800 views).

Interest generated more than **24,000 views** of our [contest Flickr set](#) and more than **100,000 views** of our [demolition photos](#). The [Web page](#) featuring **time-lapse cameras** trained on the demolition and bypass roadway construction had more than **32,800 views** during and immediately following the closure.

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WSDOT > Collections > SR 99 Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program > SR 99 South Holgate Street to South King Street Project

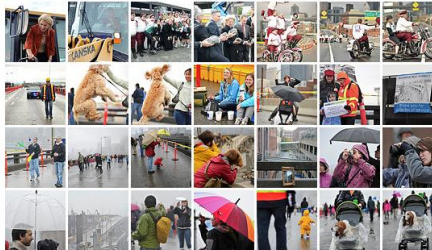


Alaskan Way Viaduct southern mile farewell event

Thumbnails Detail Map Comments



On Saturday, Oct. 22, 2011, the public took a commemorative walk on the viaduct as part of a farewell event to the southern mile of the



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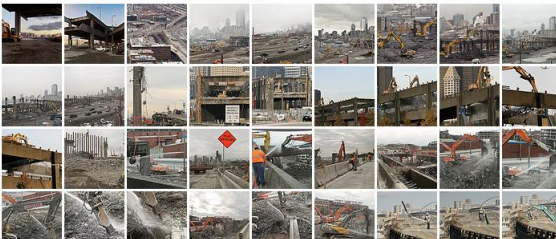


Demolishing the south end of the Alaskan Way Viaduct

Thumbnails Detail Map Comments



On Oct. 21, crews started demolishing the south end of the seismically vulnerable State Route 99 Alaskan Way Viaduct in Seattle. Learn more about the demolition and other current work underway for the Alaskan Way Viaduct Replacement Program.



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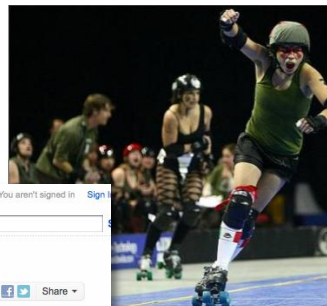
Roller derby, motorcycle stunt team win viaduct contest

By SCOTT GUTIERREZ, SEATTLEPI.COM STAFF
Updated 02:39 p.m., Friday, October 21, 2011

Ads by Google

Private Events Seattle

Your guests will be blown away by a party at Chihuly Garden and Glass



Rat City Rollergirls Photo: Joshua Trujillo, SeattlePI



The Alaskan Way Viaduct highway on Saturday.

Instead of carrying thousands of cars, the stage for the Rat City Rollergirls motorcycle stunt team.



Viaduct demolition becomes spectator event



by JOE FRYER / KING 5 News
Bio | Email | Follow: @joefryer

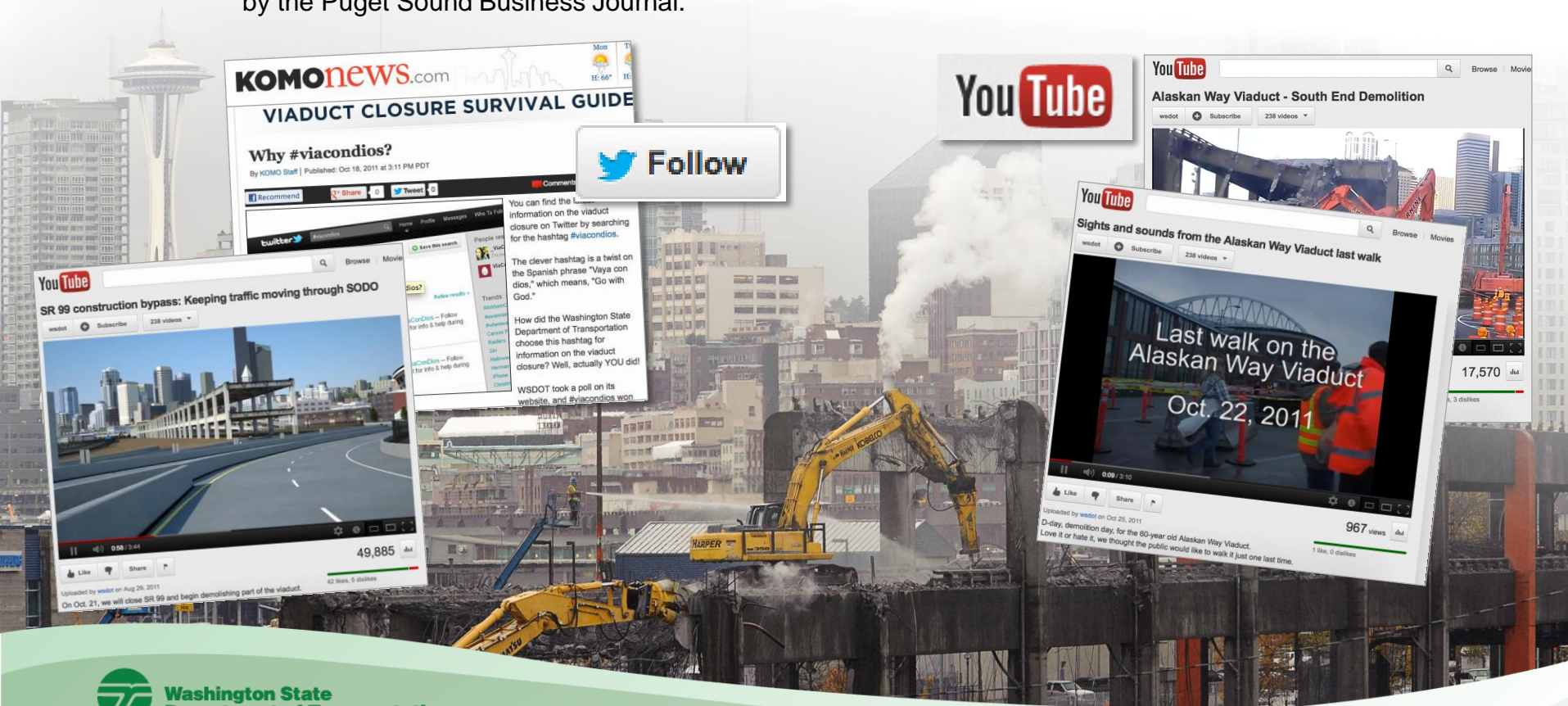
Posted on October 24, 2011 at 10:51 PM
Updated Monday, Oct 24 at 11:01 PM

SEATTLE -- The destruction of Seattle's Alaskan Way Viaduct continues to draw a crowd as entire portions of the historic two-tier road begin to disappear.

<http://www.king5.com/video/featured-videos/Viaduct-demolition-becomes-spectator-event-132509088.html>

Results: **Social media:** People had fun with social media and it was a powerful tool to share information and stories during the closure. WSDOT partnered with media and polled people to create a Twitter hashtag. [#ViaConDios](#) won and [#Viadoom trended](#) during the closure. King County, a partner agency for the project, started first and WSDOT offered a prize to the winning viaduct [haikus](#).

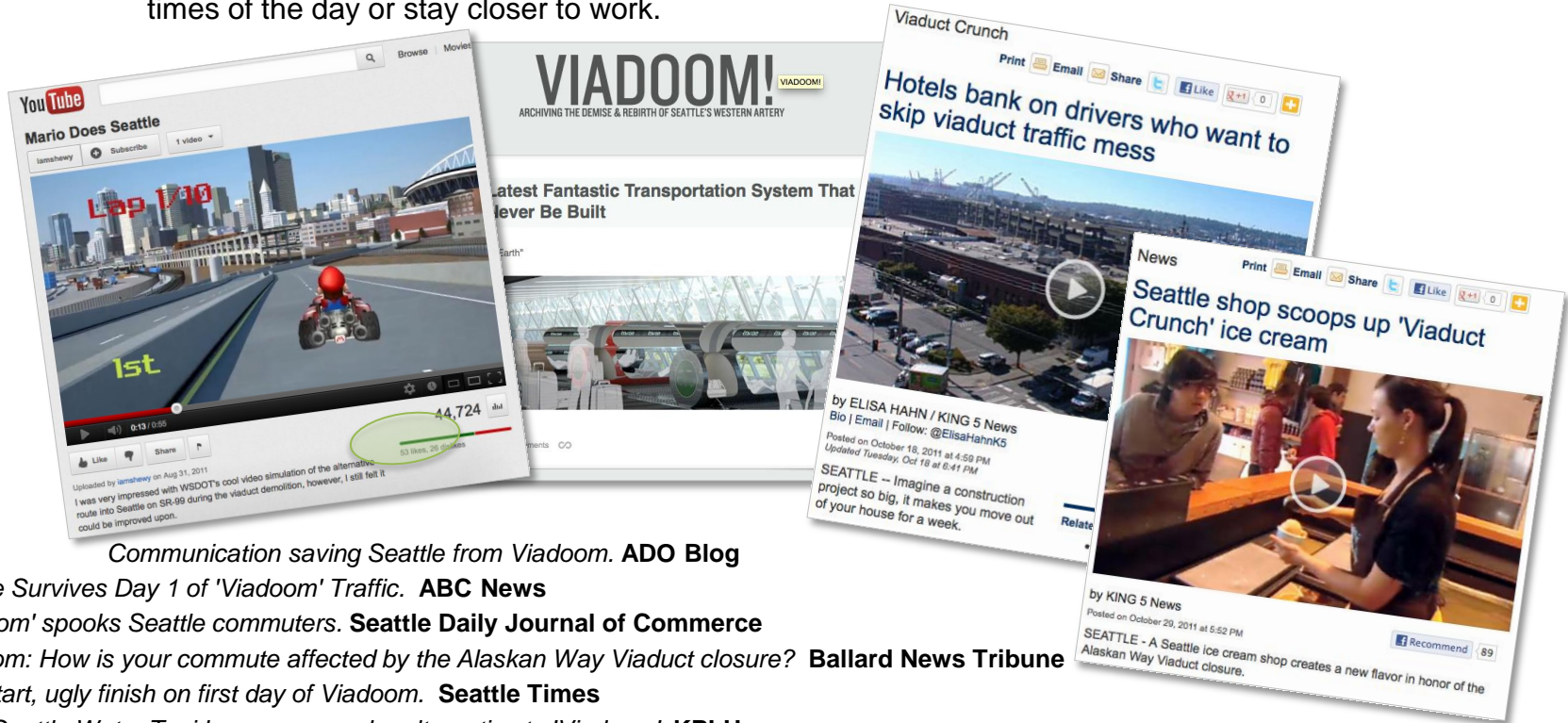
YouTube demolition videos: Because demolition was so visual, videos were helpful in reminding people of the construction work that needed to get done. A **video** showing the [final roadway configuration](#) had approximately **50,000 views** and [two short, live demolition videos](#) used by various media had almost **43,000 views**. A great synopsis of the work completed showed the [public events](#) on the viaduct in [a time-lapse video](#) by the Puget Sound Business Journal.



Results: Other messengers: Other vendors, organizations and citizens helped create content and generated project buzz before and during the closure. One citizen used our **video showing the final roadway configuration** and added [Mario from Super Mario](#) fame. This captured approximately **44,000 views**.

Another person created a [“viadoom” website](#) to chronicle the demolition and re-construction of SR 99.

Businesses also had deals to attract customers, such as a special flavor - [viaduct crunch ice cream](#) - at Molly Moon’s Homemade Ice Cream, and restaurant and [hotel deals](#) to entice people to drive at different times of the day or stay closer to work.



Communication saving Seattle from Viadoom. **ADO Blog**

Seattle Survives Day 1 of 'Viadoom' Traffic. **ABC News**

'Viadoom' spooks Seattle commuters. **Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce**

Viadoom: How is your commute affected by the Alaskan Way Viaduct closure? **Ballard News Tribune**

Fine start, ugly finish on first day of Viadoom. **Seattle Times**

West Seattle Water Taxi becomes popular alternative to 'Viadoom' **KPLU**

Seattle 'Viadoom' traffic congested but moving. **News Tribune**

'Viadoom' underwhelms, traffic moves relatively smoothly. **KCPQ**

Viaduct demolition spurs wellspring of creative

Results:

Public walk on the viaduct and contest: Providing an opportunity for the public to reflect on the historic significance of the viaduct and to **celebrate the program's achievements** proved popular. WSDOT received more than **600 contest entries**. Submissions ranged from sentimental to truly wacky and all demonstrated the enormous impact the viaduct has on the lives of people in Seattle.

The week leading up to the public walk, the viaduct program's **Public Events page** had more than **9,400 views** (compared to 38 views during a similar week in September). More than **3,200 people came** to the event on a cold and rainy October morning to pay tribute to the structure. People shared their memories on online comment boards, emails to the project team and with sidewalk chalk on the viaduct itself. The event was at the beginning of the closure, but was an appropriate send-off to a roadway that has served millions of drivers and our region for almost 60 years.

